

Message Text

SECRET

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12

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9018

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S E C R E T BUENOS AIRES 8729

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, AR

SUBJECT: SECURITY FORCES CONTINUE TO ANNOUNCE SUCCESS AGAINST
LEFTIST TERRORISTS

1. IN RECENT DAYS SECURITY FORCES HAVE ALMOST BEEN COMPETING WITH ONE ANOTHER IN ANNOUNCING SUCCESSES AGAINST LEFTIST TERRORISTS. FEDERAL INTERVENOR IN CORDOBA PROVINCE, RAUL LACABANNE, SAID ON NOV 25 AFTER BRIEFING MRS PERON THAT ORGANIZED TERRORISM HAD VIRTUALLY DISAPPEARED IN HIS PROVINCE. ON THE SAME DAY, FEDERAL POLICE GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE LISTING THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN SUPPRESSING SUBVERSION INCLUDING 100 OPERATIONS AND OVER 200 PERSONS DETAINED WITHIN RECENT MONTHS.

2. BEHIND THE PUBLICITY AND A DEGREE OF EXAGGERATION, THERE APPEAR TO BE SOME REAL SUCCESSES AGAINST THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS. A NUMBER OF THOSE DETAINED ARE ERP MEMBERS, AND THERE HAVE BEEN DISCOVERIES OF PEOPLE'S JAILS AND QUANTITIES OF ARMS. THE ARMY, UNLIKE OTHER SECURITY FORCES, HAS NOT WANTED ITS ROLE PUBLICIZED BUT IS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN INTELLIGENCE GATHERING AND COORDINATION IN SOME AREAS. IN ADDITION, TWO PROVINCES, SALTA AND TUCUMAN, NOW HAVE ACTIVE DUTY ARMY OFFICERS HEADING POLICE FORCES.

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3. MAJOR SUCCESSES AGAINST THE GUERRILLAS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN

MADE IN CORDOBA AND THE NORTHEASTERN PROVINCES AND TO A LESSER EXTENT IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL. WHILE THE DISCOVERIES ARE OFTEN ATTRIBUTED TO BRILLIANT DETECTIVE WORK AND ALERTNESS OF POLICE, MANY OF THE LEADS ARE A RESULT OF INTERROGATIONS WHEN TORTURE IS OFTEN USED. IN SOME CASES, EVEN IF THE SUSPECT SURVIVES THE INTERROGATION HE MAY BE KILLED AFTER THE POLICE HAVE FINISHED WITH HIM.

4. WHILE THE GUERRILLAS HAVE BEEN BY NO MEANS ELIMINATED, THEY HAVE BEEN HURT BY POLICE EFFORTS. THIS REDUCED CAPACITY IS EVEN REFLECTED IN THE ERP'S OWN PUBLICATIONS. "ESTRELLA ROJA", ONE SUCH PERIODICAL, USED TO GIVE A LIST OF THE MONTH'S ACTIVITIES OF MAJOR AND MINOR ACTS WHICH WOULD RUN THREE PAGES. ONE RECENT ISSUE CONSISTED OF ONLY HALF A PAGE WITH ONLY THE ASSASSINATION OF TWO ARMY OFFICERS AND ONE OR TWO OTHERS ACTS LISTED. WHILE HURTING, THE GUERRILLAS STILL MUST BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE THE ABILITY TO STRIKE AT WILL. INDEED, IN VIEW OF LACABANNE'S REMARKS, IT IS PROBABLE THAT GUERRILLAS WILL TRY TO CARRY OUT SOME ACTIONS DESIGNED TO SHOW THEY CAN STILL DO JUST THAT.

MONTLLOR

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